

Dinosaur Rescue 6 – Dako-Snappysaurus

Author: Kyle Mewburn

Illustrated by: Donovan Bixley

Synopsis

Arg is frustrated. He knows that he is old enough to go hunting but his mum won't let him go because she thinks he's only seven. Luckily for Arg, his dad doesn't worry about such things and he asks Arg to come along. Arg is excited because he has never been on a hunt before. He can't wait to put his huge brain to good use. After packing a huge amount of equipment Arg is finally ready to go. The mood of the hunting group is celebratory and soon they come upon a lake where everyone except Arg (who has more refined tastes) gorges themselves on seafood. Unfortunately the seafood is bad and everyone in the hunting party (other than Arg) ends up with violent food poisoning. They are relying on Arg to keep them safe until they are well enough to travel. What Arg doesn't realise though is that the strange lake is actually a beach and during the night the tide has come in. Arg's father and Krrk-Krrk have been swept out to sea. If it wasn't for Arg's invention the Mamtress they would already have drowned. But there's worse danger to worry about in the water than just drowning. A giant dakosaurus is after Arg's father and Krrk- Krrk.

It's going to take all of Arg's brain power to figure out a way to save his father from a grisly death.

Text Type

Dako-snappysaurus is the 6th book in the Dinosaur Rescue series written by New Zealand author Kyle Mewburn. Designed for readers aged 8–10, the books are full of hilarious and disgusting descriptions of Neanderthal behaviour and will appeal particularly to boys. Set in the Stone Age in Arg's village and the surrounding valley, the story contains fascinating information about cave people and their lifestyle. The illustrations by Donovan Bixley are lively and funny and ensure reader engagement.

Students who have read any of the other books in the series will by now be familiar with Arg, his family, his friends and the other member of his tribe. Arg has trouble fitting in with his tribe because he is so much smarter than they are. This makes him feel like an outsider at times. In this book Arg gets to go on his first ever hunt, which he is very excited about. Unfortunately, his inability to fit in with the rest of the men in his village is highlighted right from the start when he insists on taking so much equipment that he can't even carry it all. The men in the village also love to eat the seafood that they find, but to Arg it tastes disgusting. It turns out to be a stroke of luck that Arg doesn't like the shellfish because he is the only one who doesn't get sick. He alone is responsible for ensuring the safety of the hunting party.

In this story we again meet Schlok, Arg's very dumb friend, his evil sister Hng and his brave and supportive father. Themes include being proud of who you are, not giving in to peer pressure and bravery.

Sharing the Novel

The novel has been divided up as follows: Chapter 1 (pp. 9–27), Chapters 2–3 (pp. 28–53) and Chapters 4–5 (pp. 54–96).

During the shared sessions encourage students to ask questions to clarify their understanding of words and ideas presented in the novel. Have them make predictions about what will happen next in the story. Students need to learn about the main character Arg and understand the difficulties that he faces because of his superior intelligence. Most importantly, students should enjoy the book and allow themselves to get caught up in Arg's prehistoric world where dinosaurs and cavemen exist and adventures abound. The book is delightfully illustrated with humorous drawings that really bring the setting and characters to life.

Introducing the Novel

Have students study the front cover of the novel and read the blurb.

- What do you know about dinosaurs and the age in which they lived?
- Who is the main character in the story?
- What do you think happens to the hunting party?
- Have you read any other books in the Dinosaur Rescue series? What do you already know about Arg and his life?
- Open the book and study the map of Arg's village and the picture of his family. What potential dangers surround Arg's village? Who is Arg's best friend? What differences do you notice between Arg and the rest of his family?

Teacher reads Chapter 1 (pp. 9–27). Students follow along in their books.

Comprehension Chapter 1 (pp. 9–27)

- Why does Arg make scratches in the cave wall?
- How old does Arg think that he is?
- Why won't Arg's mum let him go hunting?
- Why is the hunt an exciting and scary time for the tribe?
- What potential dangers do the hunters face?
- What kind of dinosaur is Krrk-Krrk?



- What did Arg originally think that his scratching stone was?
- What does Arg collect? Why is his collection the only one in the village?
- What has Arg made out of the stone?
- Why is Arg suspicious when he sees Krrk-Krrk chasing the meat? Who is waiting for Krrk-Krrk and what does she plan to do to him?
- Who rescues Arg from Hng's club? Why isn't he concerned about what Hng is doing?
- Where does Arg's dad take him?
- How do Stone Age people know that time is passing?
- Why don't Stone Age people live very long?
- Who were the first people who divided the day into twenty-four hours?

Discussion

- What evidence is there to suggest that Arg is much smarter than the rest of his village? What problems does Arg's intelligence create for Arg?
- Why is Arg so excited about going hunting? What sorts of things do you think the men might do when they go hunting?
- What impression does Chapter one give you of Hng?
- What do you think is going to happen in the story next?

Students read Chapters 2–3 (pp. 28–53) independently before the next shared session.

Comprehension Chapters 2–3 (pp. 28–53)

- What does Arg decide to take with him on the hunt? What does he pile all of this into? What does he add to his gear when he realises that there is room? What does Arg discover when he is finished packing?
- How do the other hunters react when Arg drags his mamtress outside? Why do they react like this? How does their reaction make Arg feel?
- Who snatches the stomach sack out of his grasp? Why do you think he does this?
- Why does Arg allow Krrk-Krrk to join the hunters?
- How did Stone Age weapons evolve over time? What was wrong with the Bone and Arrow, the Poomerang and the Lavapult?
- Describe the atmosphere in the hunting party as they set off. What do they begin to worry about as the jungle closes in around them?

- Study the map of the hunting valley. What natural hazards do the hunters face?
- Why is the hunting party jumpy by the time they reach the end of the valley? Why are they strung out in a long line? Where does Arg walk? Which are the most dangerous positions in the line?
- Why does Arg think that his father might be angry with him?
- What dinosaur does Arg hear that terrifies him? Why is he surprised by its sudden appearance?
- What does the noise turn out to be? Why is Shlok's prank so dangerous? Why isn't Shlok scared?
- What other kinds of practical jokes does Shlok try and play on Arg?
- Why do the hunters begin to relax when they reach the next valley? Why aren't they worried about the brontosauruses?
- How does Arg feel when Shlok eats the dung beetle?
- Where does Arg's dad lead the men?

Discussion

- How are Arg and Shlok different?
- Do you think Arg's dad is angry with him? Why/why not?
- What do you think will happen in the story next?

Students read Chapters 4–5 (pp. 54–96) independently before the next shared session.

Comprehension Chapters 4–5 (pp. 54–96)

- What is it like for the hunters inside the crack? What does Arg think he can hear?
- Why is Arg so surprised when they finally stumble into the daylight?
- What does Arg think the body of water is? What does the illustration suggest that it actually is?
- What does Arg find strange about this "lake"?
- What do the hunters do as soon as they see the rocks?
- Why doesn't Arg want to eat the seafood?
- Name 3 delicious Neanderthal foods.
- What do the hunters do after they finish gorging themselves?

- Why does Arg think that the hunting trip is boring? How does he know that the hunters won't bother trying to catch anything else?
- Why does Arg decide to try the shellfish? What would he rather do instead of eat it?
- How does Arg know not to swallow the shellfish?
- Why is Arg so worried when he realises that all of the hunters are sick?
- How does Arg help the sick hunters?
- Why is fire "amazing stuff"?
- What does Arg discover when he wakes up? What has happened to all of his stuff? What has happened to his dad and Krrk-Krrk?
- What does Arg discover as soon as he enters the water?
- What terrible creature charges towards Arg in the water?
- What is a dakosaurus? List 3 facts about the dakosaurus.
- What does the dakosaurus aim for in the water? What does Arg use as a weapon to stop the dakosaurus? How does he feel about losing his scratching stone?
- Why does Arg initially feel despair after he has fired the shot? How does it turn out to be a lucky shot? What happens when Krrk-Krrk and Arg's dad reach the beach? Why are they still in danger? How does Arg finish the dakosaurus off?
- Why do you think Arg feels "exhausted and a little sad" after he kills the dakosaurus and becomes a real hunter?
- Why are the hunters so surprised when they wake up? Why don't they think that Arg could have killed the dakosaurus?
- Who is the only one who knows that Arg killed the dakosaurus?
- How does having his father's approval make Arg feel?

Discussion

- What qualities does Arg display during his hunting expedition?
- How might things have turned out differently if Arg hadn't taken all his stuff in the mamtress?
- In what ways is Arg different to the other hunters?
- What do you think Arg has learned from his experience?

Activities

Invention – Invent a Stone Age weapon. Include a drawing of it and explain how it is used.

Plot – Draw a flow diagram that shows 10 important events in the story in the order that occur.

Static Image – Design a poster advertising Dako-snappysaurus that would be suitable for display in your school library.

Writing – Write a letter to Kyle Mewburn explaining why you like the Dinosaur Rescue books.

Writing – Come up with a storyline for the next Dinosaur Rescue book.

Drama – Choose an important event from the story. Write a script that depicts the event. Remember to include a cast of characters and stage directions in your script. Practise your play and present it to the class.

Plot – Choose an important event from the story and explain how this event affected the outcome of the story. If this event hadn't happened might things have turned out differently?

Character – Write 5 questions with answers for Arg.

Static Image – Choose a main theme from the story and design a static image that conveys this idea. Include a quote from the text that helps to reinforce the theme.

Writing – Write an alternative ending for the story.

Notes written by Vicki Ladd

